

SYLLABUS FINAL 8.23.2021
George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Education Policy

EDPO 303 (001)/GOVT 319 (001) – Politics of American Education

3 Credits, Fall 2021

Mondays 4:30-7:10 p.m. Horizon Hall 1011, Fairfax Campus

Faculty

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Office Hours: 2 – 4 p.m. Mondays, Thompson Hall Suite 1302
Or By Appointment
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Course Website: Blackboard

Prerequisites/Co-requisites

None.

University Catalog Course Description

Focuses on the study of the American political system. Explores how interactions between various levels and branches of government affect education. Informs students studying the American political system and students interested in careers in education.

Course Overview

This course is an introduction to the historical, social, and cultural influences that have shaped political decisions affecting education in the United States. It considers the key institutions (i.e., branches of government, state education agencies, and school districts) and actors (i.e., elected and appointed officials, unions, philanthropists, businesses, communities, parents, and students) that influence education systems. Course content covers historical conflicts over education governance and policies and examines the challenges facing present-day reform efforts.

The course draws on the professor's experience working in education policy, as well as on that of policymakers making guest appearances, and will also include experiential learning to expose students to the perspectives of various policymakers working at the intersection of education and politics in America. The course will emphasize critical thinking skills and concise writing skills as well as building content knowledge.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered using a lecture and class discussion format with occasional online discussions and assignments, guest appearances from education leaders and elected officials involved in education and in-class exercises, all drawing on the instructor's professional experiences in the politics of American education.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to:

- understand and explain the connections between education and the political process in the United States;
- understand and explain how authority for education is dispersed among local, state, and federal governments;
- understand and discuss key issues in education policy at all levels of government and the different and often competing philosophies that inform education policy decisions;
- acquire the background and ability to think critically about public education issues relevant to all students, parents, voters and taxpayers in America, and to discuss same respectfully with people with different perspectives;
- enhance their ability to write well in concise formats; and
- Gain exposure to potential careers in education.

Course Website

This class uses Blackboard in order to enhance the online learning experience of students. This website contains the class syllabus and the class assignments. Note that the syllabus is subject to revision and may be adapted as the semester proceeds. The class assignments will be listed on a week-by-week basis on Blackboard -- if the Blackboard listings differ from the syllabus, follow the Blackboard listing.

All written materials are to be submitted via the class blackboard site no later than the date and time named unless otherwise specified. Late submissions will be penalized unless prior arrangements are made with the professor, which will be allowed only for good cause.

Professional Standards

Not Applicable.

Required Materials

Texts:

Tough, Paul (2016). *Helping Children Succeed: What Works and Why*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. **This text is available online for free, with supplemental materials, so no need to purchase unless you prefer hardcopy.** <http://www.paultough.com/helping/>

Hess, Frederick and P. Noguera (2021) *A Search for Common Ground: Conversations About the Toughest Questions in K-12 Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Articles and Other Materials Will be Assigned from Amongst the Following (all available online; links will be posted on Course Blackboard site):

As current events are an important part of this course and education policy is in constant motion, other articles may be assigned throughout the semester.

Baker, Al. “Culture Warrior, Gaining Ground.” *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 27 Sept. 2013, www.nytimes.com/2013/09/28/books/e-d-hirsch-sees-his-education-theories-taking-hold.html?pagewanted=all&r=0.

Baker, Bruce D. “How Money Matters for Schools.” *Learning Policy Institute*, 2017, learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/how-money-matters-report.

Bell, DA. “Who’s Afraid of Critical Race Theory?” *University of Illinois law review* 1995.4 (1995): 893–910. Print.

CREDO, Urban Charter School Study 2015, Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO), <https://urbancharters.stanford.edu/download/Urban%20Charter%20School%20Study%20Report%20on%2041%20Regions.pdf>

Cross, Christopher T. “The Shaping of Federal Education Policy over Time. The Progress of Education Reform. Volume 16, Number 2.” *Education Commission of the States*, Education Commission of the States, 30 Apr. 2015, eric.ed.gov/?id=ED556746.

Darling-Hammond, Linda, et al. “Using Technology to Support At-Risk Students' Learning.” *Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education*, Alliance for Excellent Education and Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education, 10 Sept. 2014, edpolicy.stanford.edu/library/publications/1241.

Harvard EdCast Interview with Sam Wineburg, Stanford Graduate School of Education, 1/12/17, The Myth of the Digital Native (16:41 min.)

Ingersoll et al. Teacher Workforce Trends – 2021 Update [Education Sciences | Free Full-Text | The Demographic Transformation of the Teaching Force in the United States | HTML \(mdpi.com\)](#)

In Search of History: The Scopes Monkey Trial. History Education, 1998. Film.

Jerald, Craig, et al. “High Schools of the Future: How States Can Accelerate High School Redesign.” *Center for American Progress*, Center for American Progress, 4 Dec. 2017, www.americanprogress.org/issues/education-k-12/reports/2017/12/04/443615/high-schools-future-states-can-accelerate-high-school-redesign/.

- Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC), *Low Performing Schools in Urban High Poverty Communities*, Report to the Governor and General Assembly of Virginia, (June 2014) <http://jlarc.virginia.gov/pdfs/reports/Rpt454.pdf>
- Kahlenberg, Richard D, and Jay P Greene. “Unions and the Public Interest: Is Collective Bargaining for Teachers Good for Students?” *Education next* 12.1 (2012): 60–. Print.
- Klein, Alyson. “The Every Student Succeeds Act: An ESSA Overview.” *Education Week*, Education Week, 9 Dec. 2020, www.edweek.org/policy-politics/the-every-student-succeeds-act-an-essa-overview/2016/03.
- Larson, Edward J. *Summer for the Gods: the Scopes Trial and America's Continuing Debate over Science and Religion*. Basic Books, 1997.
- Noguera, Pedro, and Esa Syyed. *City Schools and the American Dream 2: the Enduring Promise of Public Education*. Teachers College Press, 2020.
- Lisette Partelow, Sarah Shapiro. “Fixing Chronic Disinvestment in K-12 Schools.” *Center for American Progress*, 20 Sept. 2018, www.americanprogress.org/issues/education-k-12/reports/2018/09/20/457750/fixing-chronic-disinvestment-k-12-schools/.
- Romans, Angela. “Americans Who Say ‘College Isn't for Everyone’ Never Mean Their Own Kids.” *Quartz*, Quartz, 9 Dec. 2013, qz.com/155397/americans-who-say-college-isnt-for-everyone-never-mean-their-own-kids/.
- Sawchuk, Stephen. “What Is Critical Race Theory, and Why Is It Under Attack?” *Education Week*, Education Week, 11 June 2021, www.edweek.org/leadership/what-is-critical-race-theory-and-why-is-it-under-attack/2021/05.
- Schleicher, A. (2018), *World Class: How to Build a 21st-Century School System*, Strong Performers and Successful Reformers in Education, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264300002-en>.
- Siegel-Hawley, Genevieve. “A Single Garment: Creating Intentionally Diverse Schools That Benefit All Children.” *Harvard Education Press*, Harvard Education Press, 31 Dec. 2019, eric.ed.gov/?id=ED601908.
- S Steinberg, M., & Sartain, L. (2021). What explains the race gap in teacher performance ratings? Evidence from Chicago Public Schools. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 43(1), 60-82.
- Swalwell, K. *Teachers' Unions Are Not Bad for Kids*, pp. 93-102 in Gorski, Paul C. and Zenkov, Kristien, ed., (2014). *The Big Lies of School Reform: Finding Better Solutions for the Future of Public Education*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Travers, Jonathan. “What Is Resource Equity? A Working Paper That Explores the Dimensions of Resource Equity That Support Academic Excellence. Updated.” *Education Resource Strategies*, Education Resource Strategies, 30 Sept. 2018, eric.ed.gov/?id=ED593369.

Weiss, Joanne and McGuinn, Patrick. (2017). *The Evolving Role of the State Education Agency in the Era of ESSA and Trump: Past, Present, and Uncertain Future*. CPRE Working Papers.

With Good Reason (WGR) Virginia Humanities Podcast Series: Degrees of Separation
Parts I -VI, Aired March 24, 2017 through August 25, 2017
<https://www.withgoodreasonradio.org/degrees-of-separation/>

Excerpts from School Board Websites, Virginia Department of Education website, current news stories

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, VIA, hard copy). In this course, assignments will be submitted via Blackboard. Details will be shared in class and assignment materials will be linked in Blackboard. All due dates will be announced well in advance.

Assignments and/or Examinations

- **Current Education Events Presentation (5 points):** Each week 1-2 students will bring in a news item related to PreK-12 education policy. Students will have approximately 5 minutes to outline the main points of the article and suggest any policy implications. We will create a schedule at our first class meeting.

Note: This is not a formal presentation. The only written submission required is a weblink to the news item the student will be sharing. The goal is to lead a discussion on educational implications of the news story. Presenting students should not only have read the article in its entirety, but should also have spent some time considering the impact and importance of the article on education policy and specific topics we've been discussing in class.

- **Weekly Reflection/Exercise (2 points each = 16 points total)** Students will reflect on what they have learned from class readings, lectures and discussions in writing via the Blackboard Discussion Board and/or complete comparable short exercises as assigned. Students will be offered 9 reflection/exercise assignments – you may skip one of your choosing unless it is designated as mandatory. **ALL STUDENTS MUST WRITE THE FIRST REFLECTION DUE IN THE SECOND WEEK OF CLASS.** *All reflections are due by noon on the day of class unless otherwise specified.*
- **Article Summary (10 points):** Students will complete a written summary of a news item about an educational issue. The summary should be 1-2 pages long and include both the main points of the article as well as policy implications. This summary is intended to help students work on the analysis and writing skills necessary for the policy paper. You may use the same news item as your *Current Education Events* presentation if you so choose.

- **Policy Paper (25 points):** Each student will be expected to do independent reading on a current policy issue, including research on evidence-based solutions. Students will identify a policy problem and develop a policy proposal to address it. Students will submit a 3–5-page policy brief (single-spaced, memo format) to a hypothetical policymaker on the identified problem. The policy brief should identify the hypothetical recipient and sender, describe the problem, provide brief background to enable the policymaker to understand the problem, recommend one or more solutions, and provide support for the recommended solution(s). Students should demonstrate their knowledge of their chosen topic, as well as the understanding they have developed of effective policy writing. Students will submit a **First Version (15 points)** which will be graded and edited, and a **Final Version (10 points)**, which must demonstrate effective use of the suggested edits from the First Version. Additional information and expectations will be provided in class.
- **School Board Summary (4 points):** Students will attend and **summarize** a local school board meeting. The summary should be 1-2 pages long. Additional information and expectations will be provided in class. Note attending the school board meeting counts as a class session for class participation purposes.
- **Final Exam (20 points):** The final exam will assess understanding and comprehension of material from the textbook, class discussions, homework assignments, quizzes, and the midterm exam. It is therefore a cumulative examination. We will have in-class reviews. GMU also provides Reading Days one class meeting prior to finals week. More information and expectations will be provided in class.
- **Class Participation (20 points):** Active engagement with classmates and the instructor during class session is critical to your and your classmates’ understanding and comprehension of the material in this course. Students will be assessed on attendance and participation. Since the course meets just once per week, and since each class typically will involve active exercises by students, a single absence means significant missed content that cannot easily be made up. Students will be granted one “free” absence each regardless of reason, so long as work is completed, but are encouraged to reserve this for true emergencies, recognizing unforeseen circumstances may arise anytime during the semester. Except as described below during the COVID pandemic, a second absence, regardless of reason, will impact the final grade by 1/3 letter grade (A to A-, A- to B+, etc.). Each additional absence, regardless of reason, will impact the final grade by an additional 2/3 letter grade per additional missed class.
- **Health-related Attendance Policy Adjustment:** As we all learned during the pandemic, one of the best ways to protect others from contagious illnesses is to **STAY HOME IF YOU ARE SICK**. Accordingly, I will not penalize anyone for failing to attend class in-person if they are feeling unwell, and I will not require a doctor’s note. Anyone who anticipates missing class for health reasons must send me advance notice via email if possible. If you are unable to attend class in person but well enough to participate remotely, you are encouraged to participate remotely via zoom (details will be discussed at the first class). If you are not able to attend remotely, you are responsible for contacting the professor to

arrange a make-up plan, which generally will entail watching video of the missed session and writing a short report including answers to class discussion questions etc.

- **Preparation, Positive Relationships, and Appreciation of Diverse Viewpoints**

It is critical that every student comes to class well prepared, ready to interact with classmates, and prepared to ask relevant questions and share perspectives. In this course we assume positive intentions no matter what experiences students might be coming from. In any course associated with public policy there is likely to be a wide range of perspectives. This is good! It allows for rich discussion and opportunities to explore a broad range of opinions. Open mindedness, listening, and a willingness to understand each other are vital to positive outcomes.

- **Anti-Racism Statement**

As a member of the George Mason University community, I will work to create an educational environment that is committed to anti-racism and inclusive excellence. I affirm that in this class, faculty and students will work together to interrupt cycles of racism against Black individuals, indigenous people, and other people of color to cultivate a more equitable, inclusive, and just learning environments for all participants, regardless of racial background. In the class we also seek particularly to welcome and value individuals and their differences, including gender expression and identity, race, economic status, sex, sexuality, ethnicity, national origin, first language, religion, age and ability. This is particularly important in a topic such as ours where racial injustice has played such a large role over many decades and in many ways. Our discussions will often touch on the influence of race in education in America, and we can all best learn together by being kind, listening well, and valuing each other's perspectives.

- **Academic Accommodation for a Disability**

Students with varying abilities and needs add a richness to the classroom experience for all. All students are welcomed and encouraged to participate fully and to share any needs, suggestions and feedback with the professor at any time. If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see the instructor and also contact the Office of Disability Services. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).

- **Basic Course Technology Requirements**

Activities and assignments in this course will regularly use the Blackboard learning system, available at <https://mymason.gmu.edu>. Students are required to have regular, reliable access to a computer with an updated operating system (recommended: Windows 10 or Mac OSX 10.13 or higher) and a stable broadband Internet connection (cable modem, DSL, satellite broadband, etc., with a consistent 1.5 Mbps [megabits per second] download speed or higher. You can check your speed settings using the speed test on this website.)

Activities and assignments in this course may occasionally use web-conferencing software (Blackboard Collaborate / Zoom). In addition to the requirements above, students are encouraged to have a device with a functional camera and microphone. In an emergency, students can connect through a telephone call, but video connection is the expected norm.

Please plan to bring a laptop or tablet to class regularly if possible. In-class activities will use them on occasion.

- **Course Materials and Student Privacy**

In-person and virtual synchronous class sessions may be recorded for the benefit of the instructor and enrolled students. These materials will be stored on Blackboard, or another secured, private site, accessible only to the students enrolled in the course. Video recordings of class meetings that are shared only with the instructors and students officially enrolled in a class do not violate FERPA or any other privacy expectation. To protect the privacy rights of everyone in the class, they must not be shared with anyone not enrolled in this class.

- **Grading:** Please see rubric below for grading scales and assignment expectations. Specific rubrics will be provided for each major assignment as needed.

Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/>.

Class Schedule

This schedule is subject to change without advanced notice to students. Please check your GMU email and/or Blackboard daily for possible changes.

Section I: Introduction/Background on Public Education in America and Key Challenges

8/23/2021: Introduction and Class Overview/ Current Status of American Education.
Get to know each other, review syllabus and course description, assign and schedule presentations. Discuss the goals of the course. Begin to dive into some of current controversies at the intersection of politics and education.

Homework: Review Syllabus and be ready with questions re same; be prepared to talk about what you hope to get out of the class; scan the news for topics intersecting education and politics

8/30/2021: History, Purpose and Underlying Philosophies of American Education. Discuss prominent educational movements and major events in the development of the American educational system, as well as major philosophies and theories of education. How do they affect education today?

Homework:
Listen to With Good Reason, Degrees of Separation (2017), Part I (Origins)
Read Tough, Helping Children Succeed, Chapters 1-12
Hess and Noguera, Chapters 1 and 2 (Introduction and Purpose of Schooling)

Discussion Board Assignment (Mandatory) due by midnight on day before class.

9/6/2021: **LABOR DAY – NO CLASS**

9/13/2021: What Impedes or Promotes Educational Success for All? Poverty and Other Key Challenges

Homework:
Listen to With Good Reason, Degrees of Separation Part II.
Read Tough, Helping Children Succeed, Chapters 13-23.
JLARC, *Low Performing Schools* (2014), pp. 1-28 and 51-63.

Discussion Board Assignment due by midnight on day before class.

Section II: Roles of Key Stakeholders in Public Education – Federal, State and Local

9/20/21: Who Runs the Schools? Federal, State and Local Stakeholders
Homework:

Klein (2016)
Weiss and McGuinn (2017)

ARTICLE SUMMARY DUE BY MIDNIGHT SUNDAY SEPT 19

9/27/2021: **PROFESSOR AWAY** –School Board Visit -- Observe a Local School Board Meeting In-Person or Virtually This Week, instead of regular class session -- instructions will be provided.

Homework:

Review the Website of the School Board/Division you plan to visit, including the following: division goals/vision, strategic/comprehensive plan, meeting agenda, posted materials relevant to at least two agenda items, Board Member Bios, etc. Also study the School Quality Profile for the School Division on the Virginia Department of Education website.

10/4/2021: Fed/State Policymakers

SPECIAL GUESTS: U.S. SENATOR TIM KAINE, MEMBER OF SENATE HEALTH, LABOR, EDUCATION AND PENSIONS COMMITTEE, and VA. DELEGATE DAVID BULOVA, MEMBER HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS AND EDUCATION COMMITTEES

Homework:

Explore Senator Kaine's official website and the Senate HELP Committee website looking for initiatives and policies related to public education.

Explore Del. Bulova's official website for initiatives and policies related to public education.

School Board visit summary Due by Midnight on Thursday Oct. 7

Discussion Board Assignment due by midnight on day before class.

Other readings TBA.

10/11/2021: **FALL BREAK**

10/12/2021: ***NOTE CLASS IS ON TUESDAY THIS WEEK DUE TO FALL BREAK**

Follow the Money

Homework:

Baker (2017)
Partelow (2018)
Travers (2018)

Discussion Board Assignment due by midnight on day before class.

10/18/2021: Midterm Review/Catch-Up/Impact of COVID-19

Homework:

Hess and Noguera (2021) Chapter 12 (COVID-19).
Discussion Board Assignment due by midnight on day before class.

Section III: Current Topics of Conflict in Education

10/25/2021: Racial Disparities and Biases in Schools

Homework:

With Good Reason Part III (excerpts TBA) and Part VI (excerpt: Busing 2.0)
Hess and Noguera Chapters 4 and 10
Noguera (2020) excerpt TBA
Optional: Siegel-Hawley (2020) Chapter 1

Discussion Board Assignment due by midnight on day before class.

11/1/2021: Teachers: Shortages, Salaries, Unions.

**SPECIAL GUEST: NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
VICE PRESIDENT PRINCESS MOSS**

Homework:

Listen to With Good Reason Part V - Teachers.
Ingersoll (2021).
Hess and Noguera Chapter 11 Teacher Pay.
Optional: Swalwell (2014); Kahlenberg and Greene (2012).

POLICY PAPER INITIAL VERSION DUE BY MIDNIGHT SUNDAY Oct. 31

11/8/2021: School Accountability Reform Wars: Common Core, Testing, School Turnarounds

Homework:

Baker (2013)
Hess and Noguera Chapter 5
Other TBA

Discussion Board Assignment due by midnight on day before class.

11/15/2021: School Accountability Reform Wars (cont.): Choice, Charters, Privatization.

Homework:

Listen to With Good Reason Part VI (excerpts)
Hess and Noguera Chapter 3
CREDO Urban Charter School Study (2015) pp. v - vi and 1-2, 8-16.
Optional: Critiques and Response to Critiques of CREDO Study

Discussion Board Assignment due by midnight on day before class.

11/22/2021: Politics of Controversial Curricula: Critical Race Theory and Antecedents

Homework:

Derrick Bell – Who's Afraid of Critical Race Theory
Stephen Sawchuk – [What is Critical Race Theory, and Why is it Under Attack?](#)
Edward Larson – Summer for the Gods – Afterword
Pick 1

- Edward Larson – Summer for the Gods – Ch. 2
- History Channel Movie – [In Search of History: Scopes Monkey Trial](#)

Discussion Board Assignment due by midnight on day before class.

11/29/2021: Catch up and Review. This class meeting is reserved for any content that we might not have covered in other class meetings and/or topics of student interest. We will also review for the final exam.

12/3/2021: **POLICY PAPER FINAL VERSION DUE BY FRI. DEC. 3 AT MIDNIGHT**

12/6-7/2021: **Reading Days**

12/13/2021: **FINAL EXAM**

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

GMU/Schar Policy on Plagiarism

The profession of scholarship and the intellectual life of a university as well as the field of public policy inquiry depend fundamentally on a foundation of trust. Thus, any act of plagiarism strikes at the heart of the meaning of the university and the purpose of the Schar School. It constitutes a serious breach of professional ethics and it is unacceptable. **Plagiarism is the use of another's words or ideas presented as one's own.** It includes, among other things, the use of specific words, ideas, or frameworks that are the product of another's work. Honesty and thoroughness in citing sources is essential to professional accountability and personal responsibility. Appropriate citation is necessary so that arguments, evidence, and claims can be critically examined.

Plagiarism is wrong because of the injustice it does to the person whose ideas are stolen. But it is also wrong because it constitutes lying to one's professional colleagues. From a prudential perspective, it is shortsighted and self-defeating, and it can ruin a professional career.

The faculty of the Schar School takes plagiarism seriously and has adopted a zero-tolerance policy. Any plagiarized assignment will receive an automatic grade of "F." This may lead to failure for the course, resulting in dismissal from the University. This dismissal will be noted on the student's transcript. For international students who are on a university-sponsored visa (e.g., F-1, J-1 or J-2), dismissal also results in the revocation of their visa.

To help enforce the Schar School policy on plagiarism, all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit student's work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. The Schar School policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace it or substitute for it. [Undergraduate Academic Policies and Forms | Schar School of Policy and Government at George Mason University \(gmu.edu\)](http://cehd.gmu.edu/undergraduate-academic-policies-and-forms-schar-school-policy-and-government-george-mason-university) /

Resources:

GMU Writing Center <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>

GMU Libraries <http://library.gmu.edu/>

GMU Counseling and Psychological Services <http://caps.gmu.edu/>

GMU Emergency Preparedness Guides <https://ehs.gmu.edu/emergencymanagement/plans-guides/>

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>
- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to viahelp@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/> .

Grade/Pts.	Quality of Work	Completeness	Timeliness	Participation
A+ 99-100	Exceptional quality and insight; rare and valuable contributions to the field.	100% complete and error free.	100% on time.	Questions and comments reveal thoughtfulness; consistent class engagement; a class leader.
A 95-98	Very high quality; demonstrates evidence of significant reflection and evaluation; clear and convincing writing; work is almost entirely free of grammar and/or spelling and citation errors.	Accurate and seamless writing; virtually a complete product.	Nearly or always on time; communicates with professor in emergencies or unusual situations.	Excellent undergraduate student; actively engaged; provides on-target and thoughtful responses; good team participant.
A- 91-94	High quality, demonstrates evidence of significant reflection and evaluation, work mostly free of grammar and/or spelling and citation errors.	Accurate and seamless writing; virtually a complete product.	Nearly or always on time; communicates with professor in emergencies or unusual situations.	Strong undergraduate student, actively engaged, thoughtful responses and good team participant.
B+ 87-90	Convincingly on target; demonstrates evidence of understanding and application; clear and concise writing; very few distracting grammatical, spelling, or citation errors.	Accurate and seamless writing; may have minor shortcomings.	Almost always on time; communicates with professor in emergencies or unusual situations.	Above average undergraduate student; actively engaged in moving the group toward goal.
B 83-86	Competent; provides credible evidence of understanding and application; some lapses in organization, citations and/or writing clarity.	Moderate shortcomings; minor elements missing that distract the professor's ability to see the	Assignments late more than once or without adequate explanation;	Reliable and steady worker; questions and comments reveal some thought and reflection;

		product as a whole.	not necessarily chronic.	engaged almost all the time.
B-80-82	Evidence of understanding present but incomplete; writing indicates gaps in logic; grammar and/or spelling errors distract the reader; weak or insufficient citations.	Moderate shortcomings; elements missing that distract the professor's ability to see the product as a whole.	Assignments late more than once or without adequate explanation; not necessarily chronic.	Doesn't contribute often, but generally reveals some thought and reflection; follows rather than leads group activities.
C+78-79	Evidence of understanding present but incomplete; writing indicates gaps in logic; grammar and/or spelling errors distract the reader; weak or insufficient citations.	Evidence of effort but one or more significant and important points are missed or not addressed.	Multiple assignments are late; no assignments are excessively late.	Doesn't contribute often, but generally reveals some thought and reflection; follows rather than leads group activities.
C76-77	Barely meets undergraduate level quality work; unsophisticated; assignments show little or no connection to course content or concepts.	Insufficient evidence of understanding and application; important elements missing or difficult to find.	Several missed deadlines or excessively late or missing work and/or poor attendance	Weak or minimal participation; passive; occasionally unengaged in class discussions or group work; sometimes sidetracks group because of lack of preparedness.
C-74-75	Barely meets undergraduate level quality work; unsophisticated; assignments show little or no connection to course content or concepts.	Insufficient evidence of understanding and application; important elements	Excessive missed deadlines and/or poor attendance	Weak or minimal participation

		missing or difficult to find.		
D 71-73	Work is below undergraduate quality. Assignments do not meet minimum parameters for evidence or reflection but do show some good faith attempt to meet requirements of class and some benefit from same.	Difficult to recognize as the assigned task due to lack of completion but all major assignments have been turned in.	Several missed deadlines and assignments and/or poor attendance.	Minimum participation
F 70 or below	Unacceptable quality of work.	Incomplete work to the extent that it is unrecognizable as the assigned task.	Often misses deadlines and assignments; and/or poor attendance.	No constructive participation; destructive; intolerant toward other points of view.

DRAFT